

The Evangelical Revival in Scotland and the nineteenth-century “Réveil” in the Netherlands*

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Introduction

When in 1947, as a postgraduate student, I spent some happy months at New College, Edinburgh, I was struck by the consanguinity between Protestant church life in Scotland and the Netherlands. There are, indeed, common roots, and in spite of sometimes minor, sometimes rather significant differences the parallels in the fields of theology, ecclesiastical structure and spirituality are manifest. A recognition of these parallels was one of the determining factors in the contacts between nineteenth-century Scottish and Dutch evangelicals: they shared a common heritage, coined by the spirit of the Reformed variant of the sixteenth-century Reformation.

The common theological background of the Scottish and Dutch churches is reflected in their confessional status. The *Confessio Scoticana* and the Westminster Confession on the Scottish side, the so-called “Three Formularies of Unity” on the Dutch side – the *Confessio Belgica*, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort – are all distinctly Calvinistic, with both sides showing a slight difference of emphasis between the confessional statements of the sixteenth century and those of the seventeenth century, the Westminster Confession and the Canons of Dort, in which the doctrine of predestination was expressed in more or less scholastic categories. In principle, neither in Scotland nor in the Netherlands were deviations from the confessional standards tolerated. It must be added, however, that in the eighteenth century in conformity with what happened elsewhere in protestant Europe a moderate form of enlightened Protestantism partly replaced

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the strict orthodoxy of former generations.

In the nineteenth century, the influence of more liberal tendencies made itself felt in Scotland as well as in the Netherlands, though in different ways and at a different pace. In Scotland, the development in a more liberal direction was slow and gradual: in the last quarter of the century not only in the Church of Scotland, but also in the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church there was room for a broader view of the extent of the atonement than conservative Calvinism allowed, and though not without difficulties (the Robertson Smith case!) biblical criticism gained a place in Scottish theological education. Developments in the Netherlands, however, were more radical and consequently led to a strong polarization within Dutch Protestantism. In the fourth decade of the nineteenth century the "Groningen" theology, promoted by the members of the Groningen theological faculty, openly criticized various elements of traditional Calvinist theology, such as the doctrines of predestination and of eternal damnation. The Groningen theologians opposed a legalistic subscription to the confessional statements of the church; in particular they distanced themselves from the Canons of Dort, the traditional hallmark of Dutch orthodoxy. They aimed at a revival of the church in a liberal spirit; their leader, Petrus Hofstede de Groot, was disappointed when the protagonists of the evangelical movement, the "Réveil", refused to recognize him and those who sympathized with the Groningen theology as brothers-in-arms in the struggle for a revitalization of the church. Soon the Groningen theology was superseded by a more radical form of critical theology, the "modernist" theology, which had its stronghold in the divinity faculty of Leiden University. It could boast of some outstanding scholars, such as the dogmatician Johannes Hermanus Scholten and the Old Testament scholar Abraham Kuenen. The radicalism of the Leiden school, which in some respects formed a parallel to the school of Ferdinand Christian Baur in Germany, strengthened the orthodox opposition to new theological developments. It was grist to the mill of the protagonists of the Réveil, who considered the ideas of the school of Groningen and even more those of the Leiden school a most dangerous threat to the foundations of the Reformed Church. In doctrinal respect, the

polarization between “left” and “right” in the Dutch church was much stronger than that between moderates and evangelicals in Scotland.

In respect of ecclesiastical organization, the Church of Scotland and the Netherlands Reformed Church in essence had the same presbyterian form of church government; in particular at the local level, the systems in both churches were almost identical. John Henry Lorimer’s famous painting “The ordination of Elders in a Scottish Kirk” (1891, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh) is a fine illustration of the place of the elders in Scottish church life, which has its parallel in the life of the Dutch churches. At “top” level, however, there was a difference. The Scottish General Assembly is a more adequate representation of the ordinary members of the church than the Dutch General Synod was in the nineteenth-century situation: the Dutch Synod was more a small and select governing body than a mirror of the life of the church in its full breadth. Neither the Church of Scotland nor the Reformed Church in the Netherlands were state churches in the full sense of the word, though in the Netherlands until the separation between church and state (1796) the Provincial Estates and the local magistrates had a not inconsiderable influence on the affairs of the Dutch church. Also after 1796 the Dutch church, not unlike the Church of Scotland, considered itself the church of the nation. In the Netherlands, the idea of being the national church was attended by a romantic view of the place and function of the Reformed Church in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch society and by a strong anti-Roman Catholic bias, which found its culmination in the Protestant opposition to the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in 1853.

The system of lay patronage existed in the Netherlands as well as in Scotland. In the Dutch situation, the system undoubtedly played a part in local conflicts, when a patron tried to thrust a liberal candidate or minister on a conservative congregation,¹ but it did not lead to conflicts of such extent as divided the Church of Scotland in the period of the

¹ It is a matter which is still an unexplored field in the historiography of Dutch church life; further research on this point is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn.

Disruption. There are remarkable parallels between the Scottish secessions of 1733 and 1843 on the one hand and the Dutch secessions of 1834 and 1886 on the other side. In Scotland as well as in the Netherlands, those who separated from the established or national church were strict Calvinists who protested against what they considered a decline in orthodoxy. In Scotland, the struggle for a return to undefiled orthodoxy found its climax shortly after 1830: "Perceiving dogma to be an essential mark of the Church, Scottish Evangelicals worked to commit the Church firmly to the letter of the Westminster Confession of Faith".² The attitude of the leaders of the Dutch secessions was exactly the same: they aimed at bringing back the church to the pure doctrine of the Synod of Dort. Hendrik de Cock, the "father" of the Secession of 1834 (the "Afscheiding") was indefatigable in his defence of the Canons of Dort. The same holds for Abraham Kuyper, the leader of the 1886 secession (the "Doleantie", complaint about the injustice done to the orthodox part of the church). In theory, the "Doleantie" (here again there is a parallel with the Disruption) was not a secession from the church, but a liberation of the church from an alien yoke: in this case the yoke of a synod which according to the leaders of the "Doleantie" held the church captive in a system which was incompatible with the principles of Reformed discipline. In practice, however, Disruption and "Doleantie" were as much secessions as those of 1733 and 1834. But in spite of some striking parallels there is a difference between the Scottish and the Dutch secessions. While in Scotland (in particular in the Disruption) in propaganda and apology as well as in actual practice the constitutional factor was predominant, in the Dutch secessions the doctrinal factor took a central place. The difference is only slight, but in Scotland the mixture between the constitutional and the theological elements differed from that in the Netherlands.

In the field of spirituality, the similarities are obvious. The seventeenth century "Further Reformation", a reform movement within the Reformed Church, led by prominent churchmen like the Utrecht

² S.J. Brown, "The Ten Years conflict and the Disruption of 1843", in *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption*, edd. S.J. Brown and M. Fry (Edinburgh, 1993), 15.

professor Gisbertus Voetius, was strongly influenced by the theocratic and pietist elements in British Puritanism. One of the characteristics of the Further Reformation was its strict Sunday observance, which however was not adopted by the church as a whole. Ultimately, after the theocratic element foundered on the complexities of Dutch society, the pietist element prevailed. In the course of time, pietist spirituality in the Netherlands became more and more introspective. An intense interest in the marks of conversion combined with a growing fear of participating “unworthily” in the celebration of Holy Communion. Sociologically, the Further Reformation had its stronghold among the lower middle-class population of the towns and the comparable strata of society in the countryside. It has remained an undercurrent in Dutch church life until the present day. Remarkable is the awakening of 1749, which spread from the town of Nijkerk to other parts of the Netherlands. It offers an obvious parallel to the Scottish revival of 1742; as in Scotland, some ultra-orthodox considered the revival superficial.³ A less emotional form of evangelicalism was to be found among the more educated, with whom the works of theologians such as Philip Doddridge enjoyed a measure of popularity, as appears from the translation of many works of Doddridge and other English authors of devotional literature into Dutch.⁴ Through Thomas Gillespie, a pupil of Doddridge,⁵ the broadminded evangelicalism represented by Doddridge influenced the spiritual climate of the Relief Church, and no doubt after the union of 1847 also of the United Presbyterian Church.

The “Réveil” in the Netherlands

In Scotland, nineteenth-century evangelicalism was rooted in the evangelical movement of the eighteenth century. The steady growth of the evangelical party in the Church of Scotland of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries bears witness to a continuous

³ Such as Adam Gib on the Scottish side, Theodorus van der Groe on the Dutch side.

⁴ See J. van den Berg and G.F. Nuttall, *Philip Doddridge and the Netherlands* (Leiden, 1987).

⁵ G. Struthers, *The History of the Rise, Progress and Principles of the Relief Church* (Glasgow, 1843), 4-6.

development. In the Netherlands, however, the situation was different.⁶ The Further Reformation was in some parts of the country influential at the local level, but without any significant influence on the mainstream of early nineteenth-century Protestantism. The impact of the moderate form of evangelicalism which had its stronghold mainly (though not exclusively) in more educated circles was rather diffuse. It certainly manifested itself in the varied activities of the "Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap" (1797), an interdenominational missionary society, which shared with the London Missionary Society, of which it was an offshoot, a very general and inclusive doctrinal basis.⁷ Halfway through the nineteenth century, in the circle of the Netherlands Reformed Church (which, unlike the Scottish churches, as such did not engage in missionary activities), more outspoken orthodox or evangelical missionary societies sprang up next to, sometimes in opposition to, the NZG. A specific phenomenon in Dutch spiritual and ecclesiastical life in the nineteenth century was the "Réveil", a movement which borrowed its name from the related revival movement in protestant France and French-speaking Switzerland. Its character was evangelical, while its main purpose was the vivification of personal religious life and the "restoration" of the church; especially in its later development it also engaged in a variety of philanthropic activities. On this and other points (such as the high social level of many of its members) there is a certain similarity between the Réveil and the "Clapham Sect". There are elements in the Réveil which are reminiscent of late eighteenth-century evangelicalism, such as the local meetings or "reunions", which bear a close resemblance to the patrician-aristocratic religious meetings which John Wesley attended during his visits to the Netherlands in 1783 and 1786.⁸ Still, the Réveil was not just a continuation of

⁶ See J. van den Berg, "Dutch revival movements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: some considerations with regard to possible roots and connections," in *Erweckung am Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts*, edd. U. Gäbler and P.L. Schram (Amsterdam, 1986), 205-222.

⁷ For the NZG as a revival movement, see J. Boneschansker, *Het Nederlandsch Zendeling Genootschap in zijn eerste periode* (Leeuwarden, 1987), esp. 185f.

⁸ See J. van den Berg, "John Wesley's contacten met Nederland", *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 52 (1971), 36-96.

nineteenth-century Dutch evangelicalism. It represented a new phase in the history of Dutch spirituality, with its own distinctive characteristics, though it was not a national movement in a narrow or restricted sense: there were contacts with continental as well as with British evangelicalism.⁹

The beginnings of the Réveil are to be found in the third decade of the nineteenth century. In 1823 Isaac da Costa, a young Jewish scholar who had converted to Christianity under the influence of the romantic poet and scholar Willem Bilderdijk (in many ways a reactionary thinker) published his "Objections to the Spirit of the Age",¹⁰ in which he fervently protested against the prevailing lukewarm religious climate in the Netherlands. With its emphasis on redemption through the blood of Christ as the heart and core of the Christian message the little work breathes an authentic evangelical spirit. At a later stage of his spiritual development Da Costa recognized, however, that it was not in all respects felicitous, as it combined an outspoken evangelical approach with a nostalgic conservatism in the spirit of Bilderdijk. In his later development Da Costa became more broadminded, more directed towards the future of God's kingdom, an evangelical with whom an eschatological orientation (the so-called "Israelite" element in his theology) scarcely left room for nostalgic conservative sentiments.

A close friend of Da Costa was the medical doctor Abraham Capadose, like Da Costa a scion from a prominent Portuguese-Jewish Amsterdam family. Together with Da Costa he was baptized in 1823 in the Reformed "Pieterskerk" in Leiden in the presence of Bilderdijk. In spite of his criticism of the church of his days, which still increased with the growth of radical tendencies in Dutch theology, Da Costa never separated from the Reformed Church. Capadose, however, who became more and more conservative, ultimately despaired of a renewal of the church: in 1866 he severed his ties with the Reformed Church,

⁹ The standard work on the Dutch Réveil in its international context is M.E. Kluit, *Het protestantse Réveil in Nederland en daarbuiten 1815-1865* (Amsterdam, 1970). The most original parts of this work of Dr Kluit (herself a descendant of a Réveil family) are those which are based on her researches in the "Réveil-Archief", University Library, Amsterdam, of which she was the keeper.

¹⁰ *Bezwaren tegen den geest der eeuw* (Leiden, 1823), reprinted until 1974.

and in ecclesiastical respect for the rest of his life he pursued a lonely road.

In the Réveil movement, the patrician jurist, historian and politician Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer held an important place. During the years when, in the service of King William I, he regularly sojourned in Brussels (between 1827 and 1830), he was influenced in an evangelical sense by the court preacher and church historian Jean-Henri Merle d'Aubigné, a son of the Genevan Réveil. Furthermore, it was d'Aubigné who introduced him to the works of Edmund Burke and so laid the foundation for Groen's later career as a "Christian historical" or "Anti-revolutionary" politician. Groen was one of a number of (mostly still fairly young) laymen and women who sympathized with the spirit of the Protestant evangelical revival. In due course, a number of ministers also felt attracted to the Réveil. The leaders of the Réveil were explicit and uncompromising in their opposition to the theologies of the Leiden and Groningen schools; their ideal of a "restoration of the church" was closely bound up with their endeavours to eliminate all forms of deviation from orthodox doctrine. Groen van Prinsterer even advocated disciplinary measures, though only when other means would have failed. Da Costa, while agreeing with Groen's protests against the "heretics", expected more from the work of the Spirit than from juridical measures. It was a difference with regard to ways and means, not a fundamental one. The people of the Réveil were all of them orthodox evangelicals, and though in general not ultra-orthodox (some of them, among whom was Groen van Prinsterer, had their doubts about the doctrine of "double predestination") they had no affinity with innovative trends in theology. An exception to this were the theologians of the "ethical-irenical" school who, while sympathizing with the type of piety of the Réveil, like the liberal evangelicals in Britain pleaded for a more open and critical attitude. Their main representative was Daniel Chantepie de la Saussaye, a Reformed (originally Walloon) minister, who ultimately became professor of theology at Groningen university as successor of Hofstede de Groot. His ecclesiastical stand bears some resemblance to that of the "Middle Party" in the (continuing) Church of Scotland.

The Réveil movement was held together by a common spirituality,

but the only form of a more coherent organization, that of the “Christian Friends”, who between 1845 and 1854 met twice a year in Amsterdam, foundered on the ecclesiastical question. At the last meeting, there was a severe clash between Chantepie de la Saussaye, who in spite of her defects remained loyal to the Reformed Church, and Jan de Liefde, a former Mennonite minister, who since 1849 worked in Amsterdam as an evangelist without any connection with one of the existing churches. Ultimately, he founded his own “Free Evangelical Congregation”, which served as a basis for his evangelistic and philanthropic activities. In De Liefde we meet with the Réveil in its least “churchly” aspect.

In the circle of the Secession of 1834 – a group, in general, theologically just a bit more conservative than the majority of the Réveil adherents – only a few young ministers were touched by the spirit of the Réveil. One of them was Hendrik Petrus Scholte, whose independent leanings and free church ideals soon brought him into an isolated position; in 1847 he left the Netherlands for the United States. Another was Anthony Brummelkamp, who (though initially mistrusted by the ultra-orthodox) later became one of the most prominent leaders of the Secession Church (since 1869, after a reunion with a smaller group of Seceders, the Christian Reformed Church). As a professor at the Kampen Theological School (founded in 1854) his more biblical than dogmatic teaching helped to broaden the horizon of many of his students, though in essence he never deviated from traditional doctrine. Till the end he remained a conservative evangelical – broadminded within the rather narrow limits of his church.

Dutch interest in Thomas Chalmers

In the Netherlands, the first indication of an interest in the great evangelical leader Thomas Chalmers was the translation into Dutch of some of his early publications. In 1815 appeared a translation of his Glasgow sermons on “the Christian revelation, viewed in connection with the modern astronomy”; sermons of an apologetic character, which combined an evangelical approach with an attempt to bridge the gap between orthodox theology and modern scientific developments. From the introduction by the anonymous translator we receive the

impression that Chalmers was more appreciated because of his openness than because of his evangelicalism: he praised the “broad-minded, liberal way” in which Chalmers – an enthusiast for “the Realm of truth and virtue” – had dealt with his subject.¹¹ Also in 1815 the translation was published of a sermon, preached by Chalmers in 1812 in Dundee on “the propagation of the Gospel”.¹² I assume that the (equally anonymous) translator belonged to the circle of the Netherlands Missionary Society; in his preface he remarked that “this timely word” like the work of the Bible Societies could contribute to diminishing the prejudices against the Missionary Societies. A third publication of Chalmers which was translated into Dutch was his *The Evidence and Authority of the Christian Revelation* (1814); it appeared in Dutch translation in 1820. A reviewer in the *Christian Observer* saw in this work something of a new synthesis; Chalmers used the analytical techniques of the Enlightenment in order to propagate the views of “Scriptural Christianity”.¹³ As appears from the title-page of the second edition (1833) the translation was by no other than Willem Bilderdijk. From his own annotations and from the epilogue to the translation it appears that the ever grumbling poet was not in all respects happy with the work he had translated. In particular, Bilderdijk criticized the “chimera” of the idea of a natural religion and the fact that Chalmers spoke with appreciation of Newton. Apparently the “new synthesis” was wasted on Bilderdijk.¹⁴

After that – in this case certainly *post*, not *propter* – there was silence over Chalmers. Of course he was known as the great leader of the Disruption, but as a theologian he received no special attention. While he was much respected among French-speaking Protestants, and in particular by Merle d’Aubigné, who in 1845 went over to Scotland

¹¹ *Leerredenen over de christelijke openbaring, in verband beschouwd met de hedendaagsche starrekunde* (Haarlem, 1819), p. xi f.

¹² *Leerrede over de Verpligting van yder Christen om de twee groote hulpmiddelen bestemd ter uitbreiding van het Evangelie op de krachtigste wijze in het werk te stellen* (Rotterdam, 1815).

¹³ S.J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth in Scotland* (Oxford, 1982), 59.

¹⁴ *Het bewijs en gezag der christelijke openbaring* (Haarlem, 1820), 194, 201.

primarily to meet Chalmers,¹⁵ in the Netherlands there was but scant interest in his ideas.¹⁶ A few years after his death, however, two leading Dutchmen reintroduced him to the Dutch public. In a lecture, read and published in 1849 Hofstede de Groot, who because of his liberal theology in spite of his evangelistic and philanthropic strivings was (as we saw) rejected by the Réveil, painted Chalmers's ideas on poor relief as practised in Glasgow in the brightest colours.¹⁷ One year later, in 1850, Hofstede de Groot's theological and ecclesiastical opponent Groen van Prinsterer wrote to one of his Réveil-friends, the Amsterdam judge J.H. Koenen: "I am highly pleased with the ideas of Chalmers", i.e. his ideas on poor relief.¹⁸ Chalmers as well as Groen stressed the care of the poor as primarily a task of the church; in the field of poor relief, the state only had an indirect responsibility. For Groen, the matter had a particular timeliness because of the plans of the government to introduce a new poor law, which would bring the care of the poor under the wing of the state and thus would lead to an erosion of the task of the church and of its function as the heart and centre of the Christian commonwealth.

¹⁵ A.L. Drummond, *The Kirk and the Continent* (Edinburgh, 1956), 222; cf. J. McCaffrey, "The Life of Thomas Chalmers", in *The Practical and the Pious*, ed. A.C. Cheyne (Edinburgh, 1985), 51.

¹⁶ Dutch theologians of that time were better read in German, French and Swiss than in English or Scottish theology. A.R. Vinet (according to Merle d'Aubigné "the Swiss Chalmers": Drummond, *The Kirk*, 200) in particular was well known in the circle of the Réveil. The names of Vinet and Chalmers were coupled in a short obituary of the latter in the Réveil-periodical *De Vereeniging: Christelijke Stemmen* (1848), 76. For Dutch interest in Chalmers, see also J. de Bruijn, *Thomas Chalmers en zijn kerkelijk streven* (Nijkerk, 1954), 3f.

¹⁷ For this, see J. Vree, "P. Hofstede de Groot en de armverzorging door vrouwen", in *Geloven in Groningen*, edd. G. van Halsema et al. (Kampen, 1990), 223; Dr Vree supposes that De Groot was acquainted with Chalmers's views through French or German literature.

¹⁸ Groen van Prinsterer to Koenen, 15 Sept. 1850, in G. Groen van Prinsterer, *Briefwisseling*, iii ('s Gravenhage, 1949), 63 (no. 94). For Groen's sympathy with Chalmers's views on poor relief, see P.B.A. Melief, *De strijd om de armenzorg in Nederland 1795-1845* (Groningen and Djakarta, 1955), 196f., 221f.; for Groen and Chalmers's views of the church-state relation also Mrs Groen van Prinsterer's letter to Isaac da Costa, *Briefwisseling*, v, 261 (no. 253), cf. 261 n. 4.

Not all Groen's friends shared without reservations his pleasure in Chalmers's ideas. Something of Bilderdijk's criticism of Chalmers is reflected in the reaction of the conservative Leiden professor of law H.W. Tydeman, an admirer of Bilderdijk, to whom Groen had sent one of Chalmers's publications:

I thank you for the pleasure and the insight the book by Chalmers has given me: as yet I did not know him from so near. He was a great and noble and highly honourable man, – though in my comprehension a bit *ultra*-tolerant and not *sufficiently* orthodox.¹⁹

In 1856 Groen corresponded with Koenen on Chalmers's views of education. From a paper on education, written by Chalmers a few months before his death and published by Hannah in his *Memoirs*,²⁰ Koenen had deduced that Chalmers advocated a mixed school without religion. Groen corrected Koenen's interpretation: Chalmers did not want a mixed school in which there was no religious education.²¹ The fact that Koenen misunderstood Chalmers's views can be explained from the involuted way Chalmers had formulated his ideas in the paper in question. Groen, however, better understood Chalmers's intentions. Later, in 1866, he wrote to his friend L.W.C. Keuchenius, with implicit approval: "Chalmers, though the soul of the Free Church of Scotland, from necessity, has always on principle protested against the voluntary system, against a church without connection with the state...."²² Groen's agreement with Chalmers also appears from the pencil notes and underlinings in his personal copy of Chalmers's *Lectures on the Establishment and Extension of National Churches*.²³ The points which in particular interested him were the freedom of education and

¹⁹ Tydeman to Groen van Prinsterer, 23 June 1854, *Briefwisseling*, iii, 242 (no. 266).

²⁰ W. Hanna, *Memoirs of Thomas Chalmers*, ii (2nd edn., Edinburgh, 1854), 758-761.

²¹ Koenen to Groen van Prinsterer, 25 June 1856, *Briefwisseling*, iii, 242 (no. 410); Groen van Prinsterer to Koenen, 21 August 1856, *Briefwisseling*, iii, 272 (no. 457).

²² Groen van Prinsterer to Keuchenius, 16 March 1866, *Briefwisseling*, iii, 805f. (no. 1265).

²³ *Works*, xvii (Glasgow, n.d.), Royal Library, The Hague, sign. F 6, 17.

the relation between church and state: and as a leader of the Réveil he was struck by Chalmers's protest against the "vis inertiae" in reference to religion (p. 138)! Rightly, P.B.M. Melief points out that Groen as well as Chalmers had in view the ideal of a church which, standing in the context of public life and supported by the government, would be active in the re-Christianization of the life of the people.²⁴ Groen van Prinsterer recognized in Chalmers a kindred spirit. The recognition was mutual. When, in 1841, Groen had asked Chalmers for information about the question of education, Chalmers wrote in his reply: "I rejoice to hear of your energy and success on the side of pure and undefiled Christianity. May the Giver of all Grace uphold your strength in the maintenance of His own great cause of truth and righteousness".²⁵

The Dutch Seceders, the Disruption and the United Presbyterian Church

While, apart from a few exceptions in the Netherlands, the figure of Chalmers as a theologian and a social thinker remained somewhat in the shadows, the event with which his name is indissolubly linked, the Disruption of 1843, attracted much attention in orthodox circles. Understandably, the reaction of the liberals was, to say the least, lukewarm. In 1842 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, then dominated by the Evangelical Party, sent a copy of "The Claim of Right, Declaration and Protest against the Encroachments of the Court of Session" to a number of churches outside Scotland, among which was the Netherlands Reformed Church. The Synod, in which the counterparts of the Scottish Moderates were dominant, was not interested; it decided to accept the letter of the Scottish sister church "for notification".²⁶ In the period after the Disruption, the leaders of the Netherlands Reformed Church of course sympathized with the continuing Church of Scotland. Almost thirty years after the

²⁴ Melief, *De strijd*, 222. And just as to Groen, to Chalmers it was axiomatic that government should not interfere on the spiritual side: O. Chadwick, "Chalmers and the State", in *The Practical and the Pious*, 75.

²⁵ Chalmers to Groen van Prinsterer, 29 Oct. 1841, *Briefwisseling*, ii, 417 (no. 559).

²⁶ *Handelingen ... 1842* ('s-Gravenhage, 1842), 199.

Disruption, in 1872, the modernist Leiden professor L.W.A. Rauwenhoff wrote about those Scottish churches which had seceded from the mother church:

No doubt they have their own good case and their specific vocation – but always on the assumption that they rest upon the ground of the established church, whose shortcomings they want to supply; if, however, she were to fall away they themselves would lose their point of support. Let them kindle anew the fervour of religious zeal, if in the established church this might threaten to weaken, but let the established church consider it her task to prevent fanaticism and to promote love and moderation through the maintenance of the rights of the intellect.²⁷

In the circle of the Dutch Seceders the reaction to the Disruption was totally different. When, in 1815, A. Brummelkamp addressed the Free Church General Assembly on behalf of the Synod of the Dutch Secession Church he remarked, looking back to the events of 1843:

The Free Church of Scotland, in one moment was she there, on one single day she came forward, great and distinguished, into the world. It is impossible to give expression to what we felt when we heard the tidings of this event. And when we heard that it was the royal government of Christ for which you had joined battle in the power of God, our wonder, thanksgiving and admiration climbed higher and higher.²⁸

As early as 1843, another leader of the Secession, H.P. Scholte, who (as we saw) was influenced by the Réveil, had repeatedly mentioned the “revival” in Scotland in his periodical *De Reformatie*. He perceived a connection between the events in Scotland and those in Geneva and the Canton Vaud. To him, it was all part of one struggle: “The spirits of Christians are in labour”; “also in the Netherlands there comes more movement”. He mentioned the fact the General Assembly of 1842 had sought contact with a number of churches. In this context he remarked:

²⁷ “De kerk van Schotland”, *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 6 (1872), 599.

²⁸ A. Brummelkamp, Jr, *Levensbeschrijving van wijlen Professor A. Brummelkamp* (Kampen, 1910), 500.

When we compare the Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (1842) with the Report of the Synod of the Hague [the Synod of the Netherlands Reformed Church, which had its permanent seat in The Hague], it is almost impossible to give to the latter assembly ... more than the name of skeleton.

For Scholte the matter of the Church of Scotland was “our matter”.²⁹

In view of this, it was small wonder that on the table of the first General Assembly of the Free Church there was a letter from “The General Assembly of the United Christian Dissenters Communities in Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht, held at Leerdam, 27 April 1843” signed by Scholte and one elder.³⁰ It is interesting that this letter, dated from before the Disruption, took for granted that there would be a rupture. It was directed to the “Free Presbyterian Church”; the Seceders who sent the letter proposed to enter into correspondence with the newly formed church in Scotland and solicited prayers of intercession for “the Netherlands, which have sunk so low in respect of the saving truth”. The letter totally breathes the spirit of Scholte, as appears in particular from some moderately millenarian passages, which concurred with what existed in the circle of English and Scottish evangelicals, more than in the Netherlands. Mention was made of prayer-meetings, held in the Netherlands for the conversion of the “Israelites”. As in Scotland, so also in the Netherlands “the godly truth concerning the conversion and restoration of the Jews” was spreading. And the secessions which took place were seen as signs of the times: “Ought we not to observe the separation in our days as a preparation for the glorious manifestation of the kingdom of our Saviour...?”

The letter was read in the meeting of the General Assembly of 5 May 1843, one day after the Assembly had dealt with its task towards “the lost Sheep of the House of Israel”. The Assembly resolved, in continuation of the work of the “Glasgow Society for promoting

²⁹ *De Reformatie*, n.s., 2 (1842), 349f.; n.s., 4 (1843), 128-38; cf. C. Smits, *De Afscheiding van 1834*, vi (Dordrecht, 1984), 254, n.11.

³⁰ Dutch text in *De Reformatie*, n.s., 5 (1843), 142f. The body, mentioned in the letter, did not represent the whole of the (then still divided) churches of the Secession, but only that part which accepted Scholte's leadership.

Christianity among the Jews" (1819) and its English sister society, to form a church committee for the same purpose, in the hope that this "may tend to hasten on the time when all Israel shall be saved, and the restoring of them again shall be as life from the dead unto the world". On 4 July the Assembly sent an answer to the Dutch Seceders, signed by Chalmers. The Assembly appreciated the sympathy of "Christian Brethren who have passed through trials similar to our own". Furthermore, the letter pointed out the importance of the conversion of the Jews in connection with "the anticipated consummation of the fulness and universality of the reign of Christ", and it ended with declaring (it was a prelude to the founding of the Evangelical Alliance in 1846):

A greater union among the faithful of all countries, parties, and persuasions, with periodical seasons for personal intercourse and communication, would have a very exhilarating influence on our proceedings in our different stations and spheres of duty.³¹

There are no further traces of contacts between Scholte and the Free Church in the period between 1843 and his emigration to America, and one may wonder whether, if there had been more contacts, he would not have been disappointed in the Free Church. His outspoken voluntarist ecclesiastical views (which at that time, at least theoretically, were not shared by the majority of the Dutch Seceders) completely disagreed with those of Chalmers, with whom Groen van Prinsterer sympathized just because of this point.³²

In due time, without ever quite losing sight of the Free Church the Dutch Seceders orientated themselves more towards the United Presbyterian Church, perhaps a more natural ally, in which the spirit of

³¹ *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland ... May 1843* (Edinburgh, 1852), 24f., 108-10.

³² Apparently, in the Réveil circle there was some amazement at Scholte's sympathy with the Disruption, just because of the fact that Chalmers, like Groen and others, was opposed to "a systematic separation between Church and state and an unconditional separatism"; "this will not please Scholte all too much": J.A. Singendonck to his friend Groen van Prinsterer, 6 June 1843, *Briefwisseling*, ii, 521f., no. 723.

revival was not less alive than in the Free Church. In 1839, the Synod of the (then) United Secession Church had spread among its congregations in 25,000 copies an address on "Religious Revival". It met with much response: a report on the subject by a synodical committee declared that "the great need of religious quickening had been universally and deeply felt, that there had been a very large increase of the number of prayer meetings and that with many there was a deep religious concern". At the same time, however, the report warned against American forms of revivalism which "have done much to injure the cause of genuine religious revival"; "they have gone far to identify the name *Revivalist* ... with that of enthusiast or zealot".³³ The desire for a revival which would not be "enthusiastic" but well-ordered, lived on in the United Presbyterian Church. Among the United Presbyterians, the Second Evangelical Revival (1859) made its impact. And in 1861 the *United Presbyterian Magazine* wrote: "The United Presbyterian Church has taken a lead in aiming earnestly but judiciously at a true and lasting revival of religion".³⁴

The first contacts between the United Presbyterians and the Dutch Réveil were made by Jan de Liefde. He had become acquainted with the United Presbyterians through an Edinburgh bookseller who visited Amsterdam and who published some of De Liefde's writings in English translation.³⁵ In 1854, and again in 1855, De Liefde went over to Scotland, where he made a collection for his activities in Amsterdam. He was impressed by the spiritual life he met in the churches of the Secession. There were, he believed, some differences between the spiritual climate in Scotland and the Netherlands:

The character of the Scots is not communicative and given to intimacy as ours is; there, one rarely meets with conventicles in

³³ *Report on the Revival of Religion* by a Committee of the United Associate Synod 1841 (Glasgow, 1841), 4, 13.

³⁴ A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland 1843-1874* (Edinburgh, 1975), 185; *United Presbyterian Magazine* [hereafter UPM], n.s., 5 (1861), 584.

³⁵ De Liefde wrote, and also translated from the German, a number of popular tracts and stories, many of these for children. For English translations, see *British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books*, vol. 137, col. 375-6.

which the most tender experiences of the sanctified inner-life are discussed.... Perhaps that is a drawback in Scottish life, but is it unnatural? Where so much labour is done, there is also occasion and material for daily conversations. And in our country, conversations on the *inner* work often result from a lack of *outward* activities.

Perhaps this passage reflects some irritation on De Liefde's side with regard to the introverted character of those Dutch conventicles which stood in the tradition of the Further Reformation. And no doubt his picture of Scottish piety would have been different had he been acquainted with the spiritual climate of especially the Free Church in parts of the Highlands. In general, he did not in all respects sympathise with the Free Church because of its views of the relations between church and state. But he admired the United Presbyterian Church, in which he felt quite at home; the high level of congregational life, of which he gave an idealized picture, was in his view to a large degree the beneficial effect of the voluntary system. He hoped the Scottish example would be followed in the Netherlands. In a circular letter which he spread in Scotland he painted the situation of the Netherlands Reformed Church (to which he himself had never belonged) in the darkest possible colours: of its 1500 ministers there were only a hundred known whose doctrine was orthodox. It was a caricatural view, which however influenced the image of Dutch church life in the United Presbyterian circle. De Liefde saw the Netherlands as a country in deep spiritual decay, and therefore pleaded for the sending of Scottish evangelists to the Low Countries; a request to which the United Presbyterian Church did not immediately respond, though in Edinburgh and Glasgow committees were formed for the evangelisation in the Netherlands, in which also members of the Free Church participated.³⁶ If they gave any help, it would have been of a financial nature: the idea to send evangelists to the Low Countries was utterly impractical.

In 1858 De Liefde visited Scotland again. In an address to the

³⁶ For the above, see De Liefde's report on his visits in his periodical *Volksmagazijn voor burger en boer*, 5 (1856), 65-75, 97-105.

United Presbyterian Synod he repeated his charges against the Netherlands Reformed Church: practically all “established” ministers were more or less unitarian or rationalistic. The influence of the theological faculty of Leiden university, where even the virgin birth was denied, was “pernicious”. De Liefde concluded “by urging the claims of the new evangelical movement in Holland [the Réveil] upon the liberality of the Synod”. As a result, the Synod authorized the Committee on Foreign Correspondence to send a deputation to the Netherlands.³⁷ The deputation which went over to Holland in the summer of the same year consisted of four members, among whom was the influential and well-to-do layman John Henderson, whose “eminently catholic spirit”, according to a minute read shortly after his death in the Synod of 1867, “led him to take a useful interest in the operations of all evangelical churches, in this country, on the continent of Europe, and in America”.³⁸ Through De Liefde, the United Presbyterian Church had become interested in the Dutch Seceders. After having visited De Liefde in Amsterdam the deputation made a visit to the newly founded Theological School of the Seceders in Kampen, where they were received by Professor Brummelkamp.³⁹ The reception was warm and cordial, the sympathy reciprocal, as also appears from the fact that in December Mr Henderson through Isaac da Costa (here again the Réveil network!) sent a number of books to Kampen, among which were the works of Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine. Among the Dutch Seceders the United Presbyterian Church was known as “the church of the Erskines”. In spite of the language barrier (the conversation took place partly in Latin, partly in broken English) there was real communication; one of the Scottish delegates wrote in his diary: “There is a great family likeness between us”.

There was indeed common ground. The Scottish and Dutch seceders had a similar historical background. Doctrinally they were closely related. There was a slight difference: while the Dutch Seceders kept strictly to the Canons of Dort with their emphasis on the doctrine

³⁷ UPM, n.s., 2 (1858), 318-19.

³⁸ UPM, n.s., 12, (1867), 275f.

³⁹ For the following, see Brummelkamp, Jr, *Levensbeschrijving*, 477-9.

of double predestination, in the United Presbyterian Church there were (as we saw) signs of some discontent with the harsher aspects of Calvinist doctrine, which ultimately led to the Declaratory Act of 1879.⁴⁰ But to foreign observers this will have been hardly, if at all, perceptible. Another difference was that (unlike the Dutch Secession Church) the United Presbyterians used hymns for worship together with metrical psalms. The use of hymns was a heritage of the Relief Church; in 1852 a “hymn-book” was published with no less than 468 hymns.⁴¹ It is remarkable that in spite of the strong opposition of Dutch Seceders to hymn-singing in worship this point did not lead to estrangement. Apparently the Dutch hosts did not see the matter as fundamental; they explained their opposition to hymn-singing from the heterodox character of a number of hymns in the hymnary of the Netherlands Reformed Church.⁴² On the other hand, for the Dutch Seceders the use of organs, in the United Presbyterian Church still hotly discussed, was no problem at all. In sociological respect, in both churches the same pattern prevailed, though perhaps in the course of time the Scots had climbed a bit higher on the social ladder than the Dutch Seceders. There was also a conformity in life-style, based on a common evangelical orthodoxy. In their report to the Synod of 1859, the delegates praised the Seceders as “the only denomination of Dutch origin which has not given way to lax views on the religious observance of the Lord’s day. This, in a country in which open shops and theatres are so common on that day, is no mean testimony to their fidelity to conscience and to Christ”. There was diversity of opinion in the Secession circle on the subject of “endowment”, but “they are

⁴⁰ Cf., as early as 1820, the relatively mild passage on predestination in the *Summary of Principles agreed upon by the United Associate Synod of the Secession Church ... 1820* (Edinburgh, 1825), 10; also a speech by John Cairns on the doctrinal principles of the U.P. Church, held at a meeting of the Synod of the U.P. Church in England: *United Presbyterian Synod in Albion Street, London* (Manchester, 1864), 4.

⁴¹ *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, ed. N.M. de S. Cameron (Edinburgh, 1993), 421f.

⁴² Brummelkamp himself was not opposed to hymn-singing as such: see M. te Velde, *Anthony Brummelkamp 1811-1888* (Barneveld, 1988), 318.

practically a voluntary Church".⁴³

For the Dutch Seceders, the contact with their sister church in Scotland was of much importance. It broke their isolation and made them aware of belonging to a community which transcended national boundaries. This was what they needed in the process of stabilization in which they were engaged after a period of slighting by outsiders and of divisiveness in their own circle. In the United Presbyterian Church they recognized a kindred community which because of its longer history had ripened and stabilized, which had overcome the divisions of the past and which was now an important factor in the life of the Scottish people. Perhaps for Brummelkamp and his friends it was a mirror of their own church as they hoped it would develop in the near future; also a stimulus to strive for a revival of religion in the Netherlands, together with their brethren of the Réveil who were so much interested in the evangelical movement in Scotland.

In 1859 Brummelkamp and his Kampen colleague Simon van Velzen visited the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church; they offered their Scottish brethren "the right hand of fellowship". One year later, a delegation from the United Presbyterian Church visited the Synod of the Seceders, which met in Hoogeveen.⁴⁴ One of the delegates⁴⁵ mentioned the influence of Dutch theology in Scotland; in particular that the seventeenth-century Utrecht theologian Herman Witsius had given to Scottish theology its proper form and essential character. He also remarked "Your church counts among its members (as ours did in the past) mainly people who are poor after the world; not many rich, not many noble.... In the beginning, our church had to contend with many difficulties and much opposition, but we have won through". In the Dutch Seceders the United Presbyterians recognized something of their own more humble past; no doubt, this strengthened the bond of mutual sympathy.⁴⁶ The Scottish delegation fervently

⁴³ *UPM*, n.s., 3 (1859), 320.

⁴⁴ For the following, see Brummelkamp, Jr, *Levensbeschrijving*, 486f.

⁴⁵ William Peddie, minister in Edinburgh.

⁴⁶ The feelings of sympathy were voiced in a rhetorical speech by James Harper, minister in North Leith and professor at the U.P. Divinity Hall, who declared that if his arms were long enough to embrace the whole meeting he would like to fold all

advocated the system of Voluntaryism which was one of the main landmarks of the United Presbyterian Church. Impressed by the arguments of the Scottish Brethren the Synod decided not to pursue a proposal to claim state endowment for the church. It was mainly due to Scottish influence that the voluntary system prevailed.⁴⁷

For the Brummelkamp family, the Scottish connection had a special effect. In 1862, two delegates of the United Presbyterian Church visited Kampen. They brought an invitation from Mr Henderson for two students to study for one year in Scotland. Two sons of Brummelkamp, Johannes and Anthony, were chosen. In Edinburgh they attended lectures at the Divinity Hall of the United Presbyterian Church and at the Free Church theological hall, New College. Both of them became ministers in the Dutch Secession Church. For Johannes the Secession community appeared to be too narrow. His pleas for the introduction of hymns and his conciliatory attitude towards the Netherlands Reformed Church brought him into conflict with his own community. Ultimately he became a minister of the Reformed Church of Amsterdam; when the “Doleantie” rent the Reformed congregation of Amsterdam he remained loyal to the mother church which he from conviction had chosen. One may wonder whether his Scottish experiences had contributed to the broadening of his views. Anthony remained in the (then) Christian Reformed Church, in which he became a minister. He wrote his father’s biography, in which he paid much attention to Brummelkamp’s Scottish contacts.⁴⁸

Scotland and the leaders of the Réveil

Not only with the Dutch Seceders, but also in the broader circle of the Réveil the Disruption and the events which led to it made a deep impression. In 1840, Abraham Capadose brought the struggles in the Church of Scotland to the attention of the friends of the Réveil. Significantly, his contribution in a leading Réveil-periodical was

its members to his heart!

⁴⁷ For this, see the study of J. Plomp, *Zo zongen de ouden* (Kampen, 1972), esp. 22f.

⁴⁸ Te Velde, *Brummelkamp*, 373, 329-32; for Anthony and Scotland, see also J. de Haas, *Gedenkt uw voorgangers*, ii (Haarlem, 1984), 54f.

entitled "Glad tidings from Scotland". In what happened in Scottish ecclesiastical life he saw a close conjunction between revival and reformation, between spiritual renewal and a renewal of ecclesiastical life: "First health inside; then the garments of illness should be cast off".⁴⁹ He voiced the hope that the Scottish example would be followed in the Netherlands; this might result in a return of the Seceders to the church. Five years later, what happened in the Canton Vaud (the forming of the "Eglise libre" under the spiritual leadership of Alexandre Vinet) would impress him in a similar way. He considered the background the same as that of the Disruption. Capadose sent a message of sympathy to "L'Avenir", the periodical of the "Eglise libre"; to Da Costa he wrote that the Scottish brethren had done the same before him.⁵⁰ There were feelings of mutual understanding and recognition.

In 1846 Capadose visited the General Assembly of the Free Church. He probably was invited by or through the Free Church "Committee for promoting Christianity among the Jews", the continuation of the "Glasgow Society";⁵¹ there had been contacts between him and some people in Glasgow who were interested in "Jewish Missions", and also with a missionary of the Free Church in Budapest, W. Wingate. Together with his family, Capadose first stayed in Glasgow, where he met John ("Rabbi") Duncan, who had worked for some years as "missionary" among the Jews in Budapest and now taught Old Testament in New College, Edinburgh.⁵² He attended a service in the church of J.R. Anderson, minister of John Knox's Chapel and for some time Hebrew tutor in Free Church College, Glasgow, who often had revivals in his congregation and who was "immensely committed to Israel". Capadose could agree with the contents of the sermon, but did not like the manner of preaching: over-enthusiastic, extravagant, it reminded him of what he had read about Methodist

⁴⁹ *Stemmen en Beschouwingen*, 2 (1840), 494f., 510f., 556f.

⁵⁰ Capadose to Da Costa, 17 April 1846, Réveil-Archief, Coll.-Da Costa.

⁵¹ See his letter to Da Costa of 12 March 1846, Réveil-Archief, Coll.-Da Costa.

⁵² For him, see H. Watt, *New College Edinburgh. A Centenary History* (Edinburgh and London, 1946), 239f.

preachers in America.⁵³

On 25 May, together with some representatives from Geneva and France he was introduced to the Assembly. It was his “grand day”:

Yes, certainly ... it was one of the weightiest moments of my life, when I found myself some years ago in that blessed country, in the midst of that solemn Assembly.... When I saw those faithful heroes together ... a silent sigh went up from my heart to the Lord of the Church that it might please Him to make me once behold such a God-glorifying scene on Dutch soil.

In a long address Capadose paid special attention to the relation between Christ and his “ancient people” the Jews. He depicted those Jews who in the early church had accepted Christ as their Messiah as “the first free Church in Jerusalem”. After having refuted a purely spiritual explanation of the prophecies he proposed the forming of a committee which might formulate an additional article to the Westminster Confession, in which “the restoration of Israel in its hereditary land and the personal reign of King Jesus in glory before the day of judgement” would be recognized.⁵⁴ It is evident that the Assembly could not entertain this chiliastic proposal, but it would have pleased Capadose that the Assembly declared itself to be grateful for “the symptoms of revival which have recently appeared in the Churches of Holland and Belgium”.⁵⁵ The presence of the foreign visitors gave a special colour to the meetings of the Assembly. “Dr Capadose, Count St George, Professor de la Harpe, and many others came from different quarters sometimes the addresses were delivered in somewhat broken English. Often they were interspersed with foreign idioms and pronunciations; but none the less – rather all the more – they arrested

⁵³ Capadose to Da Costa, 9/11 May 1846, Réveil-Archief, Coll.-Da Costa; cf. Capadose’s *London bezocht in 1851* (Amsterdam, 1855), 64. In 1853 Anderson was deposed because of “views inconsistent with the Confession of Faith”: H. Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*, iii (Edinburgh, 1920), 418.

⁵⁴ A. Capadose, *Eene rede in de hoogste kerkvergadering der Vrije Kerk in Schotland* (n.p., [1849]), 1, 9, 11, 19.

⁵⁵ *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church 1846* (Edinburgh, 1846), 49.

the attention and spoke home to the hearts of the people....”⁵⁶

Capadose’s experiences in Scotland contributed to the founding of a Dutch committee of “Friends of Israel” (1846), of which he was the soul. In 1849 the Amsterdam local committee approached the Free Church with the request to send Carl Schwartz, a converted Jew who had already worked in the service of the Free Church in Berlin and Prague, to Amsterdam as “a missionary among the Jews”. The Free Church acceded to this request. He remained in Amsterdam till 1864; for some years he was assisted by the Scottish Free Church minister R. Smith. Schwartz was instrumental in the founding of a “Theological Seminary for home and foreign evangelization”, the so-called “Scottish Seminary”, in Amsterdam. It took the place of a projected “Christian Reformed Seminary” (which, however, did not ultimately take shape), a joint venture of a number of Réveil leaders and some Seceders who sympathized with the Réveil, among whom was Brummelkamp.⁵⁷ The plans for a Christian Reformed Seminary, which were already at an advanced stage, at the last moment foundered on the difference between churchmen and Seceders: the Dutch waters were still too deep for proto-ecumenical ventures.

The capital for the foundation of the Scottish Seminary was provided by a rich Dutch widow, Mrs J.J. Zeelt, herself a member of the Secession Church. In 1852 a Free Church delegation, to which Principal William Cunningham and James Bannerman belonged, visited Amsterdam. The delegation’s report to the General Assembly⁵⁸ stated that the business of the Seminary should be conducted by Schwartz, Smith and Isaac da Costa, “a man well known by his writings, piety,

⁵⁶ T. Brown, *Annals of the Disruption* (Edinburgh, 1893), 553f. For the impact of the Disruption on continental evangelicalism outside the Netherlands, see F. Voges, “The Disruption and Church Life on the Mainland of Europe”, in *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption*, 165-177.

⁵⁷ For this, see Kalmijn, *Capadose* 178f., 188f.; G.M. den Hartogh, *Het Christelijk Gereformeerd Seminarie te Amsterdam* (Delft, n.d.); Den Hartogh, “De Secession in Schotland van 1843 en het Schotse Seminarie in Nederland”, *Vox Theologica*, 14 (1942), 84-90.

⁵⁸ It was published in the *Witness* of 20 Nov 1852 and in the *Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland 1853* (with thanks to Professor S.J. Brown, Edinburgh).

genius and erudition".⁵⁹ The personal contacts with Da Costa confirmed the delegates in their high opinion of his qualities. The deputation expected the Seminary to have "a most beneficial influence upon the cause of Protestant and evangelical truth in the Netherlands, and in ... Belgium", and to form "a pleasing and useful bond of Christian sympathy between the two countries". Hugh Watt points out that the curriculum of the Seminary closely followed the line of New College, Edinburgh.⁶⁰

In connection with the affairs of the Seminary Da Costa and Schwartz visited the General Assembly of 1855. From Edinburgh Da Costa wrote to Groen van Prinsterer:

How we would wish to have you *all* here, in order to confirm in practice the spiritual and national and ecclesiastical alliance with this eminent people.... Observing such (anything but clerical, but) *real church*⁶¹ would even convert such a man of so little churchly inclination as I am.⁶²

It evoked with him all the more the desire for an ecclesiastical revival in the Netherlands.

In spite of all efforts the Seminary did not survive: in 1861, one year after Da Costa's death, it was closed. For Capadose, the state of affairs never had been quite satisfactory. After having read in the *Witness* the report of the Scottish delegation he wrote to Da Costa that the whole establishment was not sufficiently national, too much under

⁵⁹ Da Costa was known in the English-speaking world through the translation of two of his works: *Israel and the Gentiles* (London, 1850) and *The Four Witnesses, being a harmony of the Gospels on a New Principle* (London, 1851), originally directed against Strauss; but according to Da Costa's preface to the English translation this edition left unnoticed "the immediate dispute with an infidel theology and philosophy" (p. v f.). The *Réveil-Archief* has some letters from F.W. Ballantyne (Edinburgh) to Da Costa on the translation and publication of *The Four Witnesses*.

⁶⁰ Watt, *New College*, 51f.

⁶¹ In Dutch: "kerkelijk kerk", a church which is truly church in the sense of the Reformation, a confessing and active church.

⁶² Da Costa to Groen van Prinsterer, 23 May 1855, *Brieven van Mr. Isaac Da Costa*, ii (Amsterdam, 1873), 371f.

tutelage of the Free Church of Scotland, and presented in such a way as if there were no life in Holland.⁶³ Some years later he complained that Schwartz had given the Seminary as a present to the Scottish church.⁶⁴ For the very low-church Capadose, in spite of his initial admiration, was the Free Church perhaps too “churchly” in its activities?

From 1856 onward Schwartz carried out his activities among the Jews from the “Scottish Mission Church” (the former “French Comedy”, now again a theatre). On behalf of the Free Church he had approached a number of people from the circle of the Réveil for financial support. Groen van Prinsterer, rich and generous, now hesitated. He did not object to expansion of the work; but as a loyal churchman (in spite of all his criticism of the state of the church) he feared that, if the establishment of a congregation of the Free Church was meant, cause would be given for the accusation of “a masked secession”. But according to Schwartz, the Jews he baptized became members of the Reformed Church; the motive of the Scots was not to found a Free Church but “to repay the love, experienced by persecuted Scotsmen in past times”.⁶⁵

Conclusion

There was, indeed, affinity and mutual recognition between the evangelical revival in Scotland and the Réveil in the Netherlands; a feeling of belonging to the “evangelical brotherhood of all nations”, mentioned in a “pastoral address” of the Free Church General Assembly of 1845.⁶⁶ But just as there were differences between Scottish and Dutch church life in general there was also a difference between the evangelical revival in Scotland and in the Netherlands. In the Free Church, and to a certain degree also in the United Presbyterian Church, the evangelical revival was embedded in an institutional ecclesiastical organization. Several forms of spiritual and evangelistic activity were brought under the wing of the church. It was a tradition in

⁶³ Capadose to Da Costa, 26 Nov. 1852, Réveil-Archief, Coll.-Da Costa.

⁶⁴ Capadose to Da Costa, 14 July 1859, Réveil-Archief, Coll.-Da Costa.

⁶⁵ See Schwartz’s letter to Koenen (in German), 26 Oct. 1855, Réveil-Archief, Coll.-Koenen; Groen van Prinsterer, *Briefwisseling*, iii, 209.

⁶⁶ *Acts* 1845, 127.

Scottish Presbyterianism from the end of the eighteenth century onward; as J.H.S. Burleigh remarks: "Indeed it represents the general Presbyterian, churchly, reaction to an evangelism that abandons ecclesiastical standards and methods".⁶⁷ In the Netherlands of the nineteenth century, however, evangelicalism as represented by the Réveil movement lacked a stable institutional framework. Within the Netherlands Reformed Church the Réveil had no influence in, and scarcely made any impact on the General Synod: the attitude of the ecclesiastical leadership varied from neutral to hostile. And in the circle of the Secession Church, which in its own way aimed at a reformation of the church and a revival of personal piety, those who sympathized with the Réveil, such as Scholte and Brummelkamp, initially met with opposition from the side of the ultra-orthodox wing of the Secession community.

Apart from the fragile and temporary bridgehead of the Scottish Seminary and the work of Schwartz and Smith the Free Church had no institutional points of contact with the Dutch Réveil. The contacts between the United Presbyterians and the Dutch Seceders had a more institutional character, but they were primarily based upon their common stance as seceders, though the element of a revival of religion through mutual contacts and stimulation was not altogether absent. It is significant that at the meetings of the General Assembly of the Free Church there were representatives from various continental churches: free churches in France, Geneva, Vaud, later also the Waldensians, but that (apart from a few visits from delegates of the Dutch Secession Church) the evangelical movement in the Netherlands was represented by individual leaders of the Réveil, who had no institutional backing, no official ecclesiastical testimonies. Most of the contacts only had an incidental character; there was some compensation, however, in the fact that Dutch evangelicals could meet their Scottish counterparts in the context of the Evangelical Alliance. At the meetings of the Alliance they could also have come into contact with Scottish evangelicals who had remained loyal to the (continuing) Church of Scotland.⁶⁸ There was

⁶⁷ J.H.S. Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland* (Oxford, 1960), 312.

⁶⁸ Da Costa, Capadose and others were deeply impressed by the meeting of the

common ground between the Church of Scotland evangelicals and most leaders of the Dutch Réveil in their refusal to separate from the mother church. Still, as far as I can see, there were no regular contacts. It is possible that the Dutch, whose image of the Scottish situation was to a large degree dependent on the information they received from the side of the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church, were not sufficiently aware of the strength and influence of the evangelical group within the “Old Kirk”. And if they had been, many of them would have had the same objections to the Church of Scotland evangelicals as they had to the moderately evangelical “ethical-irenical” theologians in the Dutch church, who strove after a renewal and reformation of the church by means of spiritual persuasion rather than through militant activities.

However this may be, on the Dutch side the contacts with Scottish evangelicalism were experienced as a positive contribution in the struggle for a revival in the life of church and nation. And for many friends of the Réveil an – idealized – Free Church received an exemplary function: to them it symbolized the possibility that church and revival indeed could coalesce; they saw it as a sign that gave hope for a future alliance between church and revival in the Netherlands. But history rarely repeats itself; models and symbols rarely function outside their own peculiar historical context. In the Netherlands, the Scottish model of an alliance between church and revival never materialized.⁶⁹

Evangelical Alliance, held in London in 1851: see I. da Costa, *Een en twintig degen te Londen* (Amsterdam, 1852); Capadose, *London bezocht*; Kalmijn, *Capadose*, 200-04.

⁶⁹ The “Doleantie” of 1886 only had an indirect connection with the Réveil, most of whose sympathizers did not follow the leaders of the “Doleantie” in their secession from the church. It was not a movement in the mainstream of the evangelical revival, but an ecclesiastical reform movement which aimed at a restoration of the church after the pattern of the “Golden Age”, though with some neo-Calvinist adaptations to the situation of the late nineteenth century. In 1892, the churches of the Secession and of the “Doleantie” united to form the “Reformed (Gereformeerde) Churches in the Netherlands”, which are now on the way to reunion with the Netherlands Reformed (Hervormde) Church, thus fulfilling the cautious prediction of a Scottish observer, A.L. Drummond: “Dutch thoroughness and patience may ultimately lead to reunion” (*The Kirk and the Continent*, 165).